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ABSTRACT

The Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills (TEAMS) was developed by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), in response to Texas House Bill 72 (1984), which mandated a new basic skills assessment program for mathematics, reading, and writing at grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11. This document is one in a series of Instructional Strategies Guides designed to familiarize Texas educators with the types of strategies employed in assessing learner mastery of TEAMS objectives and to provide suggested instructional activities that can be used to promote mastery of those objectives. This guide focuses on the TEAMS writing objectives for grade 5. It provides detailed description of the test items used to measure each writing objective. The 11 objectives are subsumed under five skill areas: (1) mechanics (capitalization, punctuation, and spelling); (2) English usage; (3) sentence formation; (4) proofreading; and (5) organization/appropriate response to purpose and audience (informative/descriptive writing, informative/narrative writing, and persuasive/descriptive writing). The following information is provided for six of the objectives: (1) a description of the objective; (2) a sample item; (3) test questions; (4) answer choices; (5) answer analysis for the sample item; (6) instructional emphases; and (7) possible instructional activities. (JAZ)

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INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES GUIDE

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WRITING
GRADE 5

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TEAMS INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES GUIDE

WRITING

GRADE 5

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Acknowledgments ii

Introduction 1
Components of the Instructional Strategies Guide 1
Use of the Instructional Strategies Guide 3

Writing 4

Skill Area: Mechanics
Objective 1: Demonstrate knowledge of standard uses of capitalization. 5
Objective 2: Demonstrate knowledge of standard punctuation. 10
Objective 3: Recognize the correct spelling of commonly used words. 14

Skill Area: English Usage
Objective 4: Demonstrate knowledge of correct English usage. 17

Skill Area: Sentence Formation
Objective 5: Demonstrate the ability to distinguish complete sentences from fragments and/or run-ons. 23

Skill Area: Proofreading
Objective 6: Demonstrate the ability to proofread a written communication. 28

Skill Area: Organization/Appropriate Response to Purpose and Audience.
Objective 7: Write a composition to describe an object or picture.*
Objective 8: Write a composition to tell how to do something.*
Objective 9: Write a narrative on a specified topic. *
Objective 10: Write a composition in which two or more ideas/objects/places are classified according to specified criteria and described.*
Objective 11: Write a composition in which a choice is made and reasons that would support the choice and convince a specified audience are presented.*

* Objectives measured with a written composition will be addressed in a separate publication.

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INTRODUCTION

During 1980-1985 the Texas Education Agency (TEA) administered a criterion-referenced testing program, the Texas Assessment of Basic Skills (TABS). That program was designed to measure minimum skills in mathematics, reading, and writing at Grades 3, 5, and 9. In July 1984, under the provisions of House Bill 72, a new basic skills assessment program was mandated in mathematics, reading, and writing at Grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11. In response, development of the Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills (TEAMS) was instituted by TEA during the 1985-1986 school year.

School district personnel from across Texas participated in all aspects of the development of TEAMS. Basic skills objectives were selected after a thorough review of the State Board of Education Rules for Curriculum, GE4 450 01 (Essential Elements). Under TEA supervision measurement specifications and test items were developed for each objective. Statewide field testing was conducted to ensure the quality of test items. The State Board of Education then approved the TEAMS tests for administration.

Because of the significance of the TEAMS program, TEA is providing Texas educators with instructional strategies guides for all objectives measured on each TEAMS examination. These guides describe the TEAMS objectives as well as instructional considerations and activities that can be used to promote mastery of TEAMS objectives.

This instructional strategies guide focuses on the TEAMS writing objectives for Grade 5. It provides a detailed description of the test items used to measure each writing objective. In addition, a brief instructional analysis is provided for each objective as are instructional activities that can help students master the objective.

Texas educators will undoubtedly vary in the ways they wish to promote learner mastery of the TEAMS objectives. Thus, the instructional components of this guide are <u>not</u> intended to be prescriptive. Teachers should view suggested activities as potential approaches that lead to mastery of the TEAMS objectives.

<u>Components of the Instructional Strategies Guide</u>

Eleven TEAMS writing objectives are measured at the fifth grade level. These objectives are subsumed under one of five skill areas. The distribution of the writing objectives by skill area is on the next page.

SKILL AREA	OBJECTIVE
Mechanics	Capitalization Punctuation Spelling
English Usage	English Usage
Sentence Formation	Sentence Formation
Proofreading	Proofreading
Organization/Appropriate Response to Purpose and Audience	Informative/Descriptive Writing Informative/Narrative Writing Expressive/Narrative Writing Persuasive/Descriptive Writing

This guide provides the following information for each of the writing objectives included in the TEAMS Grade 5 test.

Description of the objective. This section provides a succinct overview of the objective's focus.

Sample item. An illustrative sample item follows the description of each objective. This item is consistent with the test specifications for the objective, hence is representative of the TEAMS items used to measure students' mastery of the objective.

Test questions. To provide a more detailed view of how each TEAMS objective is assessed, the next section provides a description of the test question. For example, Grade 5 spelling and composition items present a stimulus or test question. Test items for other fifth grade writing objectives present directions followed by four answer choices. This component of the guide provides these directions as well as a list of rules eligible for testing.

Answer choices. The next section deals with the response to each multiple-choice test item. For multiple-choice items, important characteristics of the answer choices are described.

Answer analysis for sample item. An analysis of the answer choices from the sample item is then provided for objectives measured by multiple-choice items, that is, all objectives except composition. This analysis explains why the correct answer is right and why the incorrect answers are wrong.

Instructional emphases. Considerations relevant to the design of instructional sequences for each TEAMS objective are described in this section. These instructional analyses are not intended to represent the only important points associated with instruction aimed at a particular objective. However, it is hoped that these discussions will stimulate educators' consideration of each objective.

Possible instructional activities. A final section discusses several instructional activities for each objective that Texas educators may consider as they organize their instructional plans.

Use of the Instructional Strategies Guide

This TEAMS instructional strategies guide is designed to accomplish two goals. First, the guide enables Texas educators to become familiar with the types of strategies employed to assess learner mastery of the TEAMS Grade 5 writing objectives. Educators who wish to learn more about how the TEAMS objectives are tested should consult the TEAMS objectives and measurement specifications available at cost from TEA. The level of detail provided in this instructional strategies guide should provide sufficient information for educators to design effective instructional sequences. Second, each instructional strategies guide provides suggestions for instructional activities that can be used to promote mastery of TEAMS objectives.

The specific setting in which a given district chooses to provide instruction in the TEAMS objectives will influence the way in which the materials in this guide can be employed. The format of the guide permits flexible use.

TEAMS ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS OBJECTIVES

WRITING: GRADE FIVE

Six of the eleven TEAMS fifth grade writing objectives are measured by multiple-choice items that generally present four words or groups of words, one of which is written correctly. Each test item contains four answer choices, only one of which will be correct. All possible answer choices will be indicated by letters. The test items represent the types of writing that students might produce in school or at home, such as letters, stories, or descriptions. The objectives tested in this part of the TEAMS fifth grade examination according to skill area are:

- Mechanics
  - Capitalization
  - Punctuation
  - Spelling
- English Usage
- Sentence Formation
- Proofreading

The remaining five objectives require the student to write a composition. Only one of these objectives will be tested each year. The objectives eligible for testing in this part of the writing section of the TEAMS fifth grade examination are:

- Organization/Appropriate Response to Purpose and Audience
  - Informative/Descriptive Writing
  - Informative/Narrative Writing
  - Expressive/Narrative Writing
  - Informative/Classificatory Writing
  - Persuasive/Descriptive Writing

SKILL AREA: MECHANICS

The skill area of mechanics includes three objectives, namely, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. For test items measuring capitalization, the student will be presented with four versions of the same sentence, one of which is capitalized correctly, then asked to select the version that contains correct capitalization. For test items measuring punctuation, the student will be presented with four sentences, one of which is punctuated correctly, then asked to select the sentence that contains correct punctuation. For test items measuring spelling, the student will be presented with a sentence that is missing a word, then asked to select the correct spelling of the missing word from four possible spellings.

Objective 1: Demonstrate knowledge of standard uses of capitalization.

This objective requires students to identify which one of four versions of the same sentence demonstrates correct capitalization.

Sample Item

Choose the sentence that has the correct capitalization.

A. Della Lives in abilene, Texas.

B. della Lives in abilene, Texas.

C. della lives in Abilene, Texas.

D. Della lives in Abilene, Texas.

Test Questions

1. Four answer choices, as described below, will constitute each test question.

2. Preceding the four answer choices will be the instruction, "Choose the sentence that has the correct capitalization."

3. The correctly capitalized sentence will illustrate one or more of the following capitalization rules.

a. Capitalize the first word of a sentence.

b. Capitalize the pronoun "I."

c. Capitalize the first letter of a person's name.

d. Capitalize the names of days of the week.

e. Capitalize the names of cities and states.

f. Capitalize the names of holidays.

g. Capitalize the names of months of the year.

Answer Choices

1. A test item will consist of four versions of the same simple sentence. Only one answer choice will demonstrate correct capitalization.

2. The correct answer choice will illustrate one or more of the capitalization rules listed above.

3. The three answer choices will contain violations of one or more of the aforementioned capitalization rules. Additionally, an incorrect answer choice may include one or more instances of unnecessary capitalization.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. Answer choice A is incorrect because the verb "lives" has been unnecessarily capitalized, and the name of the city "Abilene" is not capitalized. The first word of the sentence, "Della," which is also a person's name, is correctly capitalized, as is the name of the state "Texas."

2. Answer choice B is incorrect because neither "Della" nor "Abilene" is capitalized and the verb "lives" is capitalized. "Texas" is the only proper noun that has been capitalized.

3. Answer choice C is incorrect because the first word of the sentence, "Della," which is also a person's name, is not capitalized.

4. Answer choice D is correct. All three of the proper nouns have been capitalized.

Instructional Emphases

An essential component of the capitalization skill is an understanding of the difference between an ordinary noun such as "city" and a proper noun such as "Dallas." With practice and review, students should become adept at recognizing days of the week, months of the year, holidays, cities and states, and people's names as proper nouns that require capitalization. In addition, students need to remember the fundamental concept that every sentence begins with a capital letter.

Possible Instructional Activities

Cap Map

Students can be familiarized with capitalization of proper nouns that represent geographic regions. Create a map of the United States on which no geographic names appear. This map should be located on half of a bulletin board display. On the remaining half, sentences will be listed during the activity. Have available long (2' to 3') strips of paper, a red marking pen, a black marking pen, and thumbtacks with which to post sentences on the bulletin board. Each student should have a pencil and a sheet of paper.

Ask a student to indicate Texas on the map. Write "Texas" in red letters in the area representing our state. (Because this activity is designed to reinforce uses of initial capital letters, be sure to write names with initial capitals and subsequent lowercase letters.) Ask students, "In what city do we live?" If you live in Austin, for example, place a star (red or black) to indicate a capital city where Austin is located on the map. Next to the star, write in black letters, "Austin." If you live in another city, place a black dot, rather than a star, to indicate its location. Call on a student to orally provide a complete sentence telling where we live. Write this sentence on a sentence strip and post it at the top of the bulletin board section reserved for this purpose.

We live in Austin, Texas.

Students are to write this sentence on their papers. Ask questions about how capitals--and, if you wish, punctuation marks--are used in the sentence. Generate further sentences by asking students where they have been and what they know about other cities and states. Fill in state and city names as you go. Try to elicit sentences that contain uses of capital letters as described in the TEAMS eligible rules on page 7. The sentences you obtain may be similar to the following:

We live in Austin, Texas.

Felicia went to Houston last Saturday.

My brother Jed lives in Phoenix, Arizona.

Paloma went to El Paso on Thanksgiving Day.

Someday I will go to New Orleans, Louisiana.

Try to obtain about ten sentences during a session. On subsequent days, you can remove these sentences and replace them with new ones. Encourage students to find out about other cities and states that they can show you on the map. See how much of the map you can fill in.

Capital Comparisons

Students can learn to recognize words that require capitalization by comparing different versions of a sentence. Prepare a list of sentences that have different subjects. In each sentence include one capitalization error. For example:

jay likes to eat popcorn.
i like to eat popcorn.
They like to eat Popcorn.
We Like to eat popcorn.

Have your students correct each sentence by underlining the word that contains a capitalization error (either an unnecessary capital letter or a lowercase initial letter that should be a capital letter). Next to each sentence, have students rewrite the sentence so that it is capitalized correctly.

You can also carry out this activity so that it more closely resembles fifth grade TEAMS capitalization items. In this case, four versions of the same sentence will be presented. Several capitalization errors may occur within each of the three incorrect versions. Students should underline the errors they recognize in these sentence versions and circle the version that is capitalized correctly.

Categorical Capitals

Produce a list of sentences in each of which one or more words excluding the first have been replaced by blanks. Some of these blanks should represent missing proper nouns, while others should take the place of common nouns:

1. The states with which Texas shares borders are _____, _____, and _____.

2. I was born in the month of _____.

3. I like to eat _____ more then any other fruit.

4. My favorite holiday is _____.

5. The capital of Texas is _____.

6. I am wearing (a) _____ and (a) _____.

When students have completed the sentences, write headings for two columns, Proper Nouns and Common Nouns, on the board. Ask for students volunteers to provide orally examples of each from their sentences. Then categorize the example in the following manner.

	PROPER NOUNS	COMMON NOUNS
states <	Oklahoma Louisiana New Mexico	bananas > fruits jeans, sweater > items of clothing
months <	November	
holidays <	Halloween	
cities <	Austin	

Objective 2: Demonstrate knowledge of standard punctuation.

This objective requires students to identify which one of four sentences contains correct punctuation.

Sample Item

Choose the sentence that has the correct punctuation.

A. My brother wont go to the football game.

B. He enjoys books movies, and plays.

C. Will you go with me?

D. We, will have a wonderful time.

Test Questions

1. Four answer choices, as described below, will constitute each test question.

2. Preceding each set of four sentences will be the instruction, "Choose the sentence that has the correct punctuation."

3. The correctly punctuated sentence will illustrate one or more of the following punctuation rules:

   a. Periods are required at the end of declarative and imperative sentences.

   b. Question marks are required at the end of interrogative sentences.

   c. Commas are required to separate a city and state as well as following the first item in a series. (Students will not be tested on the use of the comma before "and" or "or" in a series.)

   d. Apostrophes are required in contractions made with "not" or "will."

4. The correctly punctuated sentence will have no internal punctuation except when it contains a contraction, a series, or a reference to a city and state.

Answer Choices

1. A test item will consist of four different sentences. Only one sentence will contain correct punctuation.

2. The correct answer choice will illustrate one or more of the punctuation rules listed above.

3. Each incorrect answer will contain one or more of the following rule violations:

   a. the omission of the period at the end of a declarative or imperative sentence

   b. the substitution of a period for a question mark at the end of an interrogative sentence

   c. the omission of a comma between the proper nouns comprising a city and state or following the first item in a series

   d. the omission or misplacement of an apostrophe in a contraction made with "not" or "will"

   e. any unnecessary comma usage such as placing a comma between the subject and verb of a sentence

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. Answer choice A is incorrect because an apostrophe has been omitted between the "n" and the "t" in the contraction "won't."

2. Answer choice B is incorrect. A comma has been left out between the words "books" and "movies", which are the first two items in a series. The optional comma before the word "and" in the series has been included but is not eligible for testing.

3. Answer choice C is correct because this interrogative sentence has been properly terminated with a question mark.

4. Answer choice D is incorrect because an unnecessary comma has been placed between the subject pronoun "we" and the auxiliary verb "will."

Instructional Emphases

Punctuation provides important signals that writers use to communicate clearly ideas to readers. Fundamental uses of four common punctuation marks--periods, question marks, commas, and apostrophes--are tested on the TEAMS fifth grade examination. By presenting these punctuation conventions to your students and by providing explanations regarding the practical purposes served by individual punctuation marks in various contexts, you can enhance your students' writing abilities.

The use of periods and question marks distinguishes sentences that are to be phrased as questions from those that convey a statement or a command. A period generally symbolizes a lowered voice information, while a question mark represents a raised tone.

A comma generally represents a separation of some kind. Often, such a separation is indicated by a pause in our speech. The two uses of the comma that are tested at this level are (1) the separation of the name of a city from the name of its state and (2) the separation of the first two items listed in a series. Although students will not be tested on the use of the comma that precedes "and" in a series, students will be required to recognize that a comma does follow the first item in a series. Emphasize the necessity of this comma in separating two listed terms that are not separated by a coordinating conjunction.

Equally important, students at this level should become familiar with the practice of combining certain words with "not" and "will" to form contractions. In contractions, an apostrophe represents something that has been left out. Thus the apostrophe takes the place of the absent vowel o from not in "don't" and the absent wi from will in "I'll." It will help students if they learn to associate the apostrophe in a contraction with an absent letter or letters.

You may wish to concentrate much of your punctuation instruction in these areas. You can enhance your students' performance on this section of the TEAMS examination by providing a solid foundation of correct punctuation usage.

Possible Instructional Activities

Two into One

Students should become familiar with the role of contractions in the English language. Present your students with a list of words that are often combined into contractions. For example:

would not	I will
do not	We will

could not	he will
have not	she will
should not	they will
had not	who will
are not	you will
did not	

Ask your students to make contractions from these phrases and to use each contraction in a sentence. Stress the significance of the apostrophe in these contracted constructions.

Switched Sentences

Have students write ten sentences in which they leave out all punctuation. Encourage your students to write sentences that ask questions, make statements, present items in a series, and include contractions of "not" and "will". Have pairs of students trade papers and punctuate each other's sentences. If any sentences present problems to any of the students, put that sentence on the board and go over it with the class.

Inflection Identity

Students can tune into how punctuation marks symbolize voice inflection in statements, commands, and questions in this dictation activity. Using a group of words that can be combined to make a simple sentence (for example, "Leave the room before noon"), use an interrogative or a declarative tone as you say the words aloud. Have your students write each sentence, using the punctuation mark that corresponds to the tone of your voice.

Objective 3: Recognize the correct spelling of commonly used words.

This objective requires students to recognize, from four possible spellings, the correct spelling of a word that is missing from a sentence.

Sample Item

Choose the correct spelling of the word that goes in the blank.

The baby has been crying ever _____ you left.

A. sence

B. sints

C. since

D. sinse

Test Questions

1. A test item will consist of a sentence with a missing word. The correctly spelled version of the missing word is to be selected from among four possible choices.

2. The sentence will be preceded by the instruction, "Choose the correct spelling of the word that goes in the blank."

Answer Choices

1. Four different versions of the missing word will be presented. Only one will be spelled correctly.

2. The correct answer will be the version that is spelled correctly.

3. Among the three incorrect versions, the most common misspellings of the word tested shall be presented.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. Answer choice A is incorrect because short i sound has been represented by an "e" instead of an "i."

2. Answer choice B is incorrect because the soft s sound has been represented by "ts" instead of by "c" followed by a silent "e."

3. Answer choice C is correct. This is the correct spelling of the word "since."

4. Answer choice D is incorrect because the "c" has been replaced by an "s."

Instructional Emphases

Fifth grade students are familiar with basic sound-letter correspondences, and students have acquired a variety of words whose spellings violate basic sound-letter relationships. By now, young readers should have developed the skills to decipher unfamiliar words encountered in reading. Sounding out words syllable by syllable is one tactic. Recalling and applying a knowledge of similar words is another. Similar approaches can be applied when the student is trying to spell a new word. Students also need to become adept at using the dictionary to locate correct spellings. The above approaches will help the student to arrive at a spelling close enough to permit the student to find the word in the dictionary. A student who acquires an ability to use a dictionary effectively is a student whose spelling abilities will continually improve.

Possible Instructional Activities

Spelling Sleuths

Prepare lists of words from Grade 5 reading series or spelling books, misspelling about half the words on each list. Distribute the lists to students and have them circle the misspelled words. Next to the circled misspellings, students are to write the words correctly. You may also wish to have students divide the words into syllables. For example:

check/ers
gen/tle
ex/pect

Perfect Match

Using words from a fifth grade reading series or spelling book, prepare a list of paired word parts or syllables. (For example, divide into syllables bisyllabic words such as "downstairs," "palace," and "package.") Structure the list on the chalkboard so that each part appears separately, one above the other. For example:

ace	down
pal	stairs
age	
pack	

Students are to write spelling words by combining paired syllables. This activity can be made more challenging by also including words of more than two syllables and scrambling the different parts (syllables). Have the students write as many spelling words as they can by matching the syllables.

Syllable Sounds

Students can become familiar with the correct spellings of words by writing multisyllabic words that are dictated to them. Select from Grade 5 reading series or spelling books a group of words that contain two or more syllables (for example, "desperate"). Have students write each syllable as you dictate. First say the word then say it again slowly, syllable by syllable. After dictating the list, write the correct spellings on the board or ask individual students to provide the correct spellings. Students can check their own work against the correct spellings on the board.

For additional reinforcement, have students cover each word with their fingers. Have them say aloud each syllable as they uncover, syllable by syllable, each of the spelling words.

As a follow-up activity you can have a spelling bee or a written spelling drill, using the same group of words, a day or two later.

SKILL AREA: ENGLISH USAGE

Objective 4: Demonstrate knowledge of correct English usage.

This objective requires students to identify which one of four versions of the same sentence employs correct English usage.

Sample Item

Choose the sentence that is written correctly.

A. Carlos caught a big fish yesterday.

B. Carlos catched a big fish yesterday.

C. Carlos catch a big fish yesterday.

D. Carlos is catching a big fish yesterday.

Test Questions

1. Four answer choices, as described below, will constitute each test question.

2. Preceding the four answer choices will be the instruction, "Choose the sentence that is written correctly."

3. The following usage rules are eligible for testing:

   a. Subject-Verb Agreement: A verb must agree in number and in person with the subject.

   b. Verb Conjugation: A verb must be conjugated correctly.

   c. Verb Tense: A verb must agree in tense with the time sense of a sentence.

   d. Comparative Forms: A comparative adjective must be formed correctly.

   e. Word Choice: The appropriate word must be selected for use in a sentence.

   f. Negative Constructions: A negative construction must be formed correctly.

   g. Use of "a" and "an": The indefinite articles "a" and "an" must be used appropriately.

Answer Choices

1. A test item will consist of four versions of a simple sentence. Only one version will demonstrate correct English usage.

2. Each version will contain a single main verb or a verb phrase consisting of an auxiliary verb and a participle. It will contain neither compound elements nor words or phrases placed between the subject and verb of the sentence.

3. The verb conjugations to be used will be in the simple past, present, or future tense ("ran," "run," "will run") or in the continuous present or past tense ("is playing," "was playing").

4. The correct answer will illustrate one or more of the following:

   a. correct subject-verb agreement

   b. the correct verb form (conjugation and tense)

   c. the correct comparative form of an adjective

   d. correct word choice

   e. avoidance of double negatives (the use of "scarcely" and "hardly" will not be tested.)

   f. correct usage of "a" and "an"

5. Each incorrect answer will contain one error representing one or more of the following English usage violations:

   a. lack of subject-verb agreement

      (1) number (example of error: "She eat cereal for breakfast.")

      (2) person (example of error: "I brings my flute to school on Mondays.")

   b. incorrect verb conjugation

      (1) an irregular verb conjugated as if it were regular (example of error: "The plant growed quickly.")

      (2) the verb "be" used as a main verb (example of error: "She be reading a library book.")

   c. incorrect verb tense -- a verb contradicting the time sense of the sentence (example of error: "Last week we are going to Dallas.")

d. incorrect comparative forms of adjectives

(1) a double comparison (example of error: "Your picture is more prettier than mine.")

(2) a nonexistent "-er" form (example of error: "Cookies are deliciouser than cake.")

e. incorrect word choice (example of error: "Please try to be more quite, because I'm trying to sleep.")

f. use of a double negative (example of error: "I don't have no cousins.")

g. incorrect use of "a" and "an" (example of error: "Martin is eating a apple.")

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. Answer choice A is correct. The verb form "caught" agrees in number and person with the third-person singular subject "Carlos." It also agrees in tense with the past time sense of the sentence as indicated by the word "yesterday."

2. Answer choice B is incorrect. An irregular verb is conjugated as a regular verb.

3. Answer choice C is incorrect. The verb form violates both tense and subject-verb agreement.

4. Answer choice D is incorrect. The past time sense indicated by the word "yesterday" is violated by the use of a present tense verb form.

Instructional Emphases

In addition to verb usage, fifth grade students must pay attention to comparative forms, word choice, negative constructions (with particular attention to avoiding double negatives), and the indefinite articles "a" and "an." You may wish to focus much of your English usage instruction on these areas so that your students will have a sense of familiarity with material tested on the usage section of the TEAMS examination.

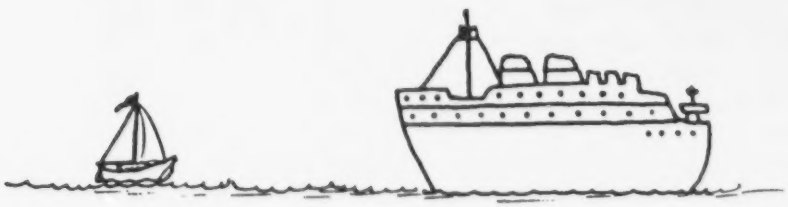
Students of all ages may be perplexed and somewhat disconcerted to find that the way they have learned to speak is not "correct." These students will have a more difficult time "switching codes" when attempting to write or speak standard American English. Continual exposure to written and spoken standard American English forms will facilitate the internalization of those forms.

You may wish to discuss nonstandard dialects, particularly those spoken by students in your class or school. Point out differences between each of those dialects and standard forms. For example, many individuals employ double negative forms in their speech. These forms are prohibited in standard English. By pointing out these differences in a noncritical way, you can alert students to their existence. Then, when a student encounters such a form, the student may remember that it is nonstandard and search for the standard equivalent.

Possible Instructional Activities

Let's Compare

Create a series of about 5 pairs of simple drawings. Each pair of drawings should represent a pair of comparable objects or beings and may be labeled. Ask students to write three to five sentences comparing each pair of drawings. Comparisons may be assumed or evident from the drawings. For example:



sailboat steamship

1. The sailboat is smaller than the steamship.
2. The steamship is faster than the sailboat.
3. The sailboat is shorter than the steamship.
4. The steamship is more comfortable than the sailboat.
5. The sailboat is more beautiful than the steamship.

When students have completed their sentences, call on students to read sentences aloud. Compare each pair of drawings. Collect papers. Find a sentence with an error in the comparative form and write it on the board. Discuss the error and correct the sentence. Continue according to your students' overall facility with the comparative forms.

Provide similar practice sheets for students who have problems with comparative constructions. Return the sheets with corrections.

Eating Dessert in the Desert

This activity involves words that are not homonyms but are similar enough in sound and/or spelling to be easily confused. You can introduce the activity by writing the above title on the board and asking a student to read it aloud. Point out that the two words "dessert" and "desert" are sometimes confusing because they are almost the same in the way they sound and in the way they are spelled. Ask students if they can think of any other pairs of words that are easily confused for these reasons. Offer your own suggestions as necessary. Some that might be obtained are:

quite/quiet	then/than	of/off
accept/except	loose/lose	are/our

Have students produce three sentences for each pair. For example:

I am quite happy to meet you.
It's very quiet here by the lake.
That man is quite quiet.

An Apple and A Pear

Provide practice for your students in the use of the indefinite article forms "a" and "an." Once the concepts of "a" preceding a noun that begins with a consonant and "an" preceding a noun beginning with a vowel sound have been presented, students need occasional practice to reinforce the concepts until the implementation of these usage conventions becomes habitual.

Divide your students into vertical or horizontal rows. Direct the students in each row to compose a list of ten items within a certain category. Each row is to be assigned a different category. For example: Each student in row A is to write a list of ten fruits and vegetables. Each student in row B is to write a list of ten modes of transportation. Each student in row C is to write a list of ten animals. (To create more categories, the "animal" category can be divided into classes such as "mammals," "birds," and "insects," depending on your students' familiarity with wildlife forms.) Other suggested categories are "relatives," "objects in the classroom," and "buildings."

When students have completed their lists, have each student pass the list to a nearby student in another row. This student is to provide an indefinite article for each item listed.

Call on a student in each row to read a list of items preceded by indefinite articles. Other students may offer additional items from that row's assigned category when this student has finished. Write a few representative examples on the board--particularly vowel-initial words, which will be relatively rare. Group words in two unlabeled groups: (1) words preceded by "an"; and (2) words preceded by "a".

an apple	a pear	a banana
an airplane	a train	a bicycle
an ant	a bee	a moth
an armadillo	a cat	a horse
an eagle	a robin	a crow
an uncle	a father	a sister
an eraser	a map	a book
an office building	a library	a supermarket

Point out the fact that most words begin with consonants. Ask students why they think this is so (there are many more consonants than vowels in the alphabet). Explain that, because most words begin with consonants, most nouns take "a" as their indefinite article.

Circle the group of "an" words. Ask students why all these words have "an" before them (they all begin with vowels, namely, "a," "e," "i," "o," and "u").

For students who need occasional extra practice, you may want to: (1) provide lists of nouns to which the student is to attach indefinite articles; (2) pair students together and have them compose lists to exchange; or (3) have students generate their own lists, either according to specified semantic categories or according to whether words begin with vowels or consonants. For this last option, the student can divide a paper into two columns, one for nouns beginning with a vowel and one for nouns beginning with a consonant. The student then fills the columns with nouns from any or all categories, providing the appropriate indefinite article for each noun.

A Name Game

Create or have students produce pictures of objects, animals, and people (characterized by their occupations, for example) such as those generated in the previous activity. As you show each picture to the class, call on a student to name the object, animal, or person depicted with a preceding indefinite article. For example, if you present a picture of a plumber, the student should say, "A plumber." Present the pictures in rapid succession and encourage the rest of the class to correct students who make errors such as "a alligator."

SKILL AREA: SENTENCE FORMATION

Objective 5: Demonstrate the ability to distinguish complete sentences from fragments and/or run-ons.

This objective requires students to identify which one of four groups of words forms a complete sentence.

Sample Item

Read each group of words. Find the group that is a complete sentence.

A. The curtains are raised the show begins.

B. Dancing across the stage.

C. In her new pink ballet slippers.

D. Her heart is beating fast.

Test Questions

1. Four groups of words, as described below, will be presented.

2. Preceding each set of four groups of words will be the instructions, "Read each group of words. Find the group that is a complete sentence."

Answer Choices

1. Each group of words will begin with a capital letter and end with a period. One group will be a complete simple sentence. Each of the other three groups will be a sentence fragment or a run-on as described below.

2. The correct answer will be the complete sentence. This sentence will follow subject-verb-complement or subject-verb-modifier order.

3. Each incorrect answer will exemplify one of the following.

   a. a word group with a subject but no predicate (example of error: "The house at the end of the block.")

b. a word group with a predicate but no subject (example of error: "Ate most of his dinner this evening.") (Groups of words that could be imperative forms--"Eat your soup." "Open the window."--will not be tested.)

c. a prepositional phrase (example of error: "In the glass bowl.")

d. a participial phrase (examples of error: "Swimming in Blueberry Lake." "Painted green and yellow.")

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. Answer A is incorrect. Two independent clauses are run together without a period or conjunction between them, thus forming a run-on.

2. Answer B is incorrect. This group of words forms a participial phrase which, standing alone, is not a sentence but a sentence fragment.

3. Answer C is incorrect. A prepositional phrase standing alone is a sentence fragment.

4. Answer D is correct. This group of words contains a subject and a predicate and, therefore, forms a complete sentence.

Instructional Emphases

Students taking the TEAMS examination at the fifth grade level are required to distinguish complete sentences from both sentence fragments and run-ons. In addition to the three types of sentence fragments tested in the third grade (subject without predicate, predicate without subject, and prepositional phrase), participial phrases as fragments are included. For activities and review instruction on the former three types of fragments, you may wish to refer to the third grade instructional guide. Once your students have become reacquainted with the sentence formation concepts presented therein, you can present participial phrases as comprising one more type of word group that cannot stand alone as a sentence.

When students possess an understanding of what constitutes a complete sentence, you can progress to the concept of properly constructed compound sentences. In other words, you can explain to students what they must do to connect two complete sentences, creating one "long" sentence. Teach them to look for a necessary "connecting word" (coordinating conjunction) such as "and" when two groups of words, each containing both a subject and a predicate, are connected. Instruct students that if this connecting word is missing, the long group of words is called a "run-on" and is not a correctly formed sentence.

Possible Instructional Activities

Sentence Exchange

Direct each student to write ten sentences, each consisting of five to ten words. Have each student exchange papers with another student who is to divide each sentence into subject and predicate. A student who has trouble dividing a sentence should raise a hand and read the sentence aloud. Write every problem sentence on the board as it is offered.

When students have finished dividing the ten sentences they have been given, they should all turn with you to the sentences on the board. Discuss each one, determining whether it has both a subject and a predicate and, if so, identifying them. Identify sentence fragments, if they occur, and discuss why each of these groups of words is a fragment and not a complete sentence. Discuss run-ons in a similar manner.

Phrase Phase

Ask a student, "Where are you?" The student might respond, "At school," "In my seat," or "In the classroom." Write the response on the board (with an initial capital a final period). Ask numerous other questions that are likely to elicit prepositional phrases. For example:

Where is my desk (the flag/this piece of chalk/[student's name]/your mother)?
Where do you go on Sundays?
When do you come to school?
Where did you get your lunch money?

Write prepositional phrases in one column on the board as you obtain them as responses. You should have a series such as the following.

At school.
In the classroom.
In your hand.
Next to Juana.
On an airplane.
To church.
After breakfast.
From my brother.

Circle the preposition in each phrase and say, "These little words give us information about things like place and time. Does anyone remember what they're called?" Obtain or provide the identification of these terms as prepositions and remind students that the groups of words on the board are called "prepositional phrases."

To the right of your column of prepositional phrases, you will now create a column of participial phrases. Elicit these phrases as spontaneous responses to questions such as the following:

What are you doing?
What am I doing?
What is [student's name] doing?
What do you enjoy doing at home (at school/in the classroom/on the playground)?
What happened to .....?

On the board you should have a list of participial phrases such as:

Listening to you.
Standing by the chalkboard.
Scratching his head.
Reading comic books and eating popcorn.
Seeing my friends.
Playing handball.
Eaten by birds.
Lost in my bag.

Circle the participles and identify them as such; then identify the group as "participial phrases." Write this term above the column. Above both columns, underline the word phrase and ask for student definitions of this term. Expand upon these conceptions, relating the idea of a phrase to complete sentence formation. Inform your students that any group of words that is called a "phrase" can never be a complete sentence; it can only form a part of a sentence. Discuss the fact that these two kinds of phrases contain neither subject nor predicate, both of which are required by complete sentences.

Mention that the phrases are made to look like sentences by having initial capitals and final periods. This is how they will appear on the TEAMS examination. You may wish to emphasize this format by erasing periods and replacing capital letters with lower case letters.

Let's Be Complete

Following the above activity, ask students to write complete sentences containing the phrases that are on the board. They may create new sentences or try to remember the original contexts of the responses. Have them share some of their sentences with the class. Collect papers when you feel that students have demonstrated proficiency at creating sentences from these two types of sentence fragments.

Pairs of Pictures

Find or create pairs of pictures that can be described in pairs of sentences such as, "The lion is yawning. The mouse is running away." and "The boy is eating. The girl is reading a book."

Attach a pair of pictures at the top of the chalkboard. (Separate them so that you will have enough space to write a sentence under each picture.) Ask a student to describe the first picture in a complete sentence. Write this sentence underneath the picture it describes. Ask another student for a complete sentence describing the second picture. Write this sentence below the picture it describes.

Use these sentences to demonstrate how two complete sentences are joined together to form one sentence. You may wish to explain that a sentence in which two sentences have been combined is called a "compound sentence." At first, use "and" as your coordinating conjuction. (Remember that a coordinating conjunction connecting independent clauses must be preceded by a comma.) With pairs of pictures whose semantic (meaning) relationships seem to warrant another coordinating conjuction, such as "but," introduce the new conjuction.

Explain that simply running two sentences together without the comma and the conjuction forms an incorrect construction called a "run-on."

Use enough pairs of pictures to establish student proficiency at creating compound sentences and recognizing run-ons.

SKILL: PROOFREADING

Objective 6: Demonstrate the ability to proofread a written communication.

This objective requires students to identify an error in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, or English usage within a specified part of a communication.

Sample Items

Read each line below. In each line, there is a mistake in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, or in the way a word is used. Find the underlined part of each line that has the mistake. On your answer sheet mark the letter under the part you choose.

My (A) friend jose (B) is absent (C) from school today. (D)

He (E) called (F) me (G) on the telephone during brekfast (H)

and telled (A) me that his stomach (B) hurt. (C) I hope (D)

h'ell (E) be healthy (F) tomorrow. (G) I (H) miss that boy.

Test Questions

1. Four lines of text comprising a description or story will be presented. Each line of text will be a test item containing four answer choices as described below.

2. Preceding each group of four lines of text will be the instructions, "Read each line below. In each line, there is a mistake in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, or in the way a word is used. Find the underlined part of each line that has the mistake. On your answer sheet mark the letter under the part you choose."

Answer Choices

1. Each line of text, each of which constitutes a test item, will contain four parts that are underlined. An underlined part shall include one or more words and/or numbers. One of the four underlined parts will contain an error in

spelling, punctuation, capitalization, or usage. The other three underlined parts will contain no mistakes.

2. The correct answer will be the underlined part of the line of text that contains an error in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, or usage. Only the errors defined as eligible in each of these skill areas at Grade 5 will be eligible for testing in the proofreading section.

3. The three incorrect answers will be the underlined parts of the line of text that are written correctly.

4. No line of text will exceed 15 words in length.

5. An underlined part may extend beyond a word to indicate that the punctuation mark or lack of punctuation shall be considered. An underlined part at the end of a sentence will extend beyond the final word to include the period or lack of a period. Whenever a date is tested, the entire date will be underlined. Whenever a city and state are tested together, the entire group of words will be underlined.

Answer Analysis for Sample Items

NOTE: In the proofreading objective, each one of the four lines of text comprising a unified description or story constitutes a test item. Each line, therefore, contains a correct answer choice and three incorrect answer choices.

1. The first line of text contains a capitalization error. The name "Jose" is written with a lowercase "j." Because this name is underlined and labeled "B," the correct answer for this item is answer choice B. Answers A, C, and D are incorrect answer choices because the corresponding underlined parts of this line of text contain no errors; they are written correctly.

2. The second line of text contains a spelling error. The word "breakfast" is misspelled as "brekfast" in the underlined part of the sentence labeled "H." The correct answer is, therefore, H. Answers E, F, and G are incorrect answer choices because these parts of the line of text are written correctly.

3. The correct answer for the third line of text is A because the corresponding underlined part of the sentence contains an English usage error: the irregular past tense form of "tell" is conjugated as if it were regular. The third person singular past tense form of "tell" is "told," not "telled," as it is written in the item. Answers B, C, and D are incorrect answer choices because these parts of the sentences are written correctly.

4. The last line of text contains a punctuation error in the underlined part of the sentence labeled "E": the apostrophe in the contraction "he'll" has been misplaced. The correct answer, therefore, is E. Answers F, G, and H are incorrect answer choices because these parts of the sentence are written correctly.

Instructional Emphases

Proofreading is an important skill that should be acquired by students at all levels. It is imperative that students learn to edit or correct, their work before submitting it to their teacher. A sense of pride in, and responsibility for, one's writing is an attitude that should be instilled in young writers.

The rules and conventions that are tested in the individual TEAMS objectives of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and English usage will appear in proofreading items. Therefore, any instruction and activities that you implement within these four areas will contribute to your students' degree of preparation for the TEAMS proofreading objective.

Possible Instructional Activities

Component Corrections

Students can acquire proofreading skills by learning to examine parts of sentences for various kinds of usage errors. Write on the board, or on handouts, a list of sentences that are divided into structural parts. For example:

She/rided/the Horse/through/the green pastre?

Incorporate into each sentence at least four errors, one for each subskill tested. For instance, in the example sentence above: "rided" is a verb tense (English usage) error; "Horse" is a capitalization error; "pastre" is a misspelling of the fifth grade spelling word "pasture"; and a punctuation error is demonstrated by the substitution of a question mark for a period. Students are to identify the errors and make the necessary corrections.

Quadrupled Quandaries

Write four versions of a simple sentence on the board. Include one of the four error types in each sentence. For example:

My dad will recive an award tomorrow. (spelling error)
My Dad will receive an award tomorrow. (capitalization error)
My dad, will receive an award tomorrow. (punctuation error)
My dad received an award tomorrow. (English usage error)

Have students identify the error type in each sentence and make the necessary correction. Provide several groups of sentences demonstrating various examples of errors.

Editing Eyes

Select a paragraph from a book, newspaper, or other source and rewrite it so that it contains numerous errors in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and English usage. Write the passage on the board or project with an overhead projector. Call on students to identify errors orally.